

Report
of the
Lord's Work

Hammend's Plains

1906-1907

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REPORT OF THE LORD'S WORK.

HAMMOND'S PLAINS, 1906-1907.

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Heb. ii. 6.

"The just shall live by faith." Rom. i. 17, Gal. iii. 11, etc.

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23.

"We walk by faith not by sight." II. Cor. v. 7.

"All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive." Matt. xxi. 22.

"The Apostles said unto the Lord, 'Increase our faith.'" Luke xvii. 5.

"Nevertheless when the son of man cometh will He find faith on earth." Luke xviii. 8.

In publishing these reports my object is to give encouragement to faith, and show to unbelievers the reality of the things of God, and the reliability of His written word. Should it please the Lord to bless my efforts to this end, nothing that I can do would perhaps be more glorifying to Him. For as I see it the woes and evils of all men are traceable to unbelief; and that socialism or communism in the political world, or the "new theology," in the religious world, is not the cure for them, but more faith, more hope.

The discouraged man soon yields to miserable circumstances. There is no cure for him until his hope, his faith revives. But let it not live on the expectation of some casual change in the condition of his natural life. That is

to prepare the way for its ultimate defeat. It is the shattered hope that sinks us to greatest despair. We don't easily hope again when we have struggled to maintain our expectations only to have them crushed at last. If we are to uniformly hope, it must be hope against probability. Rom. iv. 18. We must expect to accomplish the naturally impossible. There is only one way to do that. Put our trust in Him with whom nothing is impossible, and maintain it under all circumstances, never hoping in the uncertain shiftings of earthly conditions. We must measure our prospects by our faith in God's ability and willingness to help us. If in the beginning our faith is weak we at least will be saved from hoping for more than will come to pass; for we shall find by actual experience that God will act for us according to our faith. Matt. ix. 29. A most important fact since it is in the experience of life that our hope and faith are sustained or defeated. No hope for changed and more favorable conditions of life, or even faith in God will avail us if in our actual experiences it should fail.

Therefore I want to speak of what I *really know and have seen*. Not of which is merely the result of a process of reasoning. If I cannot speak here of the novel and the marvellous there is this satisfaction, that it is *real*. If I should appear to be dogmatic where it may seem that I am just giving my views, let it be remembered that I talk of what I have seen, and of what I have experienced. Yet in this report we don't wish to speak so much of the experiences as the lessons we have been taught by them.

It was four years the 30th day of June last since we gave up our stated salary, and determined that we would make our wants known to God only. I could never have had the courage to do this had not God been in it, much less could we have continued steadfast to our determination without Him. Yet these two things we have done, and to-day the man does not live who can honestly say that we have asked him for a single dollar during this period. We did ask for some articles, now two years since, after being asked to do so should we need them, but, as we saw this would not work

well we gave it up. We believed then as we do now that we were acting according to God's written word, and the example of those who first preached the Gospel. (See Matt. vi. 19-34, Luke vi. 35-38; Mark x. 29-30). Here we are a family of six, and much of the time with our help, seven in all. We have had sickness and unforeseen expenses of different kinds, and for these four years it has been the exception when we have had more than ten dollars on hand that was our own. The most of the time we have had only enough to get supplies from week to week, or from day to day, and not so infrequently from day to day. But for all this we have not been brought to confusion. We have neither suffered from cold nor hunger. Have never, on account of want, missed an appointment or an engagement on this field of labor which covers about twenty-five miles in all, and neither my wife nor myself has been permitted to regret that we began to live this way, but are more than ever anxious to do more for the Lord on the same principle. The value of such facts as these, and their bearing on the word of God should be seen by even the casual reader.

We could give many extracts from my journal in verification of the above statements, as we did in our last Report, if they were really necessary. A few, however, may be of interest to the reader.

Monday, June 4th, 1906.—Now we have only a little over \$3.00 in hand to begin the week with, though we have (my wife and I) repeatedly besought the Lord to give us more money. It is now to be seen again what the Lord will do. June 9th.—It has not pleased the Lord yet to send the money for which we have been praying. My faith was weak yesterday afternoon, but is stronger now, and I am looking out for help. We were given about 40 cents worth of sundries last evening. Thank the Lord, and may he richly bless the giver. I am now happy, though we are indeed in straightened circumstances. My wife is also happy. June 12th, Sunday —. The Lord graciously gave us through the boxes, \$12.18. This came when all was gone.

I did not record this in my last report, lest it should

appear that we were taking advantage of the Report to make our wants known for purposes of appeal for help. We *never mention our wants to any but our kind Father in Heaven, at the time we are enduring them.* Let this be kept in mind.

"July 17th.—Our means have been more abundant of late." "Dec. 24th.—It stormed heavily Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday (yesterday) the walking was quite bad, and the day was damp, so small congregations came out, and the prospect was unfavourable as to the offerings, but by grace I was able in a measure at least to look to God, and not to the offerings. I had thought about this during the week and remembered that God had helped me before when nothing came in through the boxes, and was now ready to cast myself upon God again. But now it pleased the Lord to give me \$8.42 through the boxes, and one sister gave us \$5.00, and to-day we were sent two dollars more, and I received \$5.00 from another party, making \$20.42 since yesterday morning, and about \$2.05 worth of sundries were given us also. How easy for the Lord to help us when it is good for us. But the temporal help is not the greatest these blessings bring. Yesterday afternoon I felt particularly tried as to the prospect of my service, as I looked at the handful of people before me and prayed for faith to do my duty and trust God for the results. And while I was thus praying to myself the sister above mentioned sent me the five dollars. I took it as from God, and said something like this to myself: "The day has looked as if I should receive little or nothing, but God has helped me with means in spite of this. He can bless His kingdom through my service though the external prospects look so unfavourable."

These may be taken as characteristic of many experiences which we have passed through during the year, but it would take quite a volume to contain all the entries of them in my journal.

Our trials during this year have not been so prolonged as they were last year. But while we have reason to thank God for this, we see that had they been more severe we might have grown more in faith, and service.

God has not hitherto used us to bring together large numbers, and raise up any large enterprise in His service as He did Franke, Taylor, Muller, Culles, and others who have lived in this way. We feel, however, that with God's blessing there is this advantage about our work—that it is small enough to be appreciated by the smaller mind, and possibly less faith. When God's works are very large we seem to fail to see the power that moves them. They appear to go themselves. The vast and uniform operations of the universe do not seem to say much to the ordinary man of the presence, power, and carefulness of God. These things are all too big for us to grasp. These great works of faith of which we have had notable instances seem, it may be, to go by some natural law of self propagation. Unbelief may say that they advertise themselves by their very operations. Of course that is not the case; for they were once small and unknown. But somehow, even Christians seem to feel that it might do for those wonderful religious and charitable enterprises to be carried on by faith, without salary, regular subscriptions or advertising, but for small and obscure churches or charities or businesses and professions, it would not do. The people would forget them, and their support would fail. This certainly, as can be seen, is only the argument of unbelief. For if it is God who really cares for the work, what does it matter if the church or the world knows, by any means that we can recognize, of its needs. We feel, however, that even these unreasonable explanations cannot be so easily urged against the success of our work. For we are but an obscure quantity in God's great kingdom, and our needs are unknown beyond our home. So if people are moved to help us, it is because God moves them, and not because of any notoriety that attaches to our work and that advertises us to the world.

Should it be thought, however, that we have a particular gift of faith that only the few can have, or that it is because of our piety, let me say that such is not the case. There is evidently a gift of faith, as may be seen by reference to 1. Cor. 12: 4 v., etc. This faith does not seem to depend on the choice of the individual who may be enabled to exercise

it, but on the Spirit who gives it, 1. Cor. 12: 5. But we do not trust God in the way we do because we have that gift. The faith we are enabled to exercise with regard to our daily needs, and in our service for the Lord is the same faith found in every real believer in Jesus, and which every real believer exercises in some degree. It is simply the ability to take God at His word. As to our temporal needs, for example, we take literally His instructions, Matt. 6: 19-34, etc., and believe that if we fulfill its conditions, that He will some how provide for us, though there might be no human probability of it. If we had the *gift* of faith we could expect a certain thing would come to pass when there was no written promise to the effect. It seems to be of a prophetic nature. Only once in my experience have I consciously exercised *that gift*. This was in the case of a person who seemed to be dying. I seemed able to exercise "the prayer of faith," James 5: 15, for his recovery. I had no doubt as to the result, and of course he recovered, though there is no promise in the Word that I would, or demand that I should exercise faith on such an occasion. I say these things for the benefit of those who may think that they could not do as we do, and that God does not expect it of them.

If hitherto we have refrained from urging others to live by faith, it is not because we have thought this to be especially for us, but because we saw it to be more important to live by it than to advocate it for others, and at the end that that would be, with God's blessing, the best advocacy of it. Let us not recommend to others that which we have not experienced and seen to be good. Let the charlatan try his medicines on the body. If he make the fatal mistake, he has only cut short a human life. But let not the curate of souls recommend anything, however desirable it may seem, if he have not proved it, lest he destroys a soul for whom Christ died. If in the tests of life our lauded beliefs fail, we should not be surprised when men begin to doubt the very truth. But then, at whose door lies the greater wrong? How painful to see men, without having had their creeds sufficiently tested in God's crucible of life and death, trot

out some new thing, or advocate some antiquated error because it looks all so plausible. In view of the serious nature of that which has to do with the human soul, the eternal destiny of men, how could we lightly proclaim to others anything new or old, that we had not found to be undoubtedly safe? Therefore, we were by grace, encouraged to believe that if those we ministered among did not wholly sympathise with our views, that that would in the end, tend to prove the reality of faith; as it would show that our success was not due to their co-operation. Any way we could not expect them to accept this principle before we acted on it, as that would prove we were advocating a faith we did not have ourselves. For the fact is that we trust God independently of all else, or that we look to circumstances, or brethren, or friends, and in that prove we do not trust him alone. But now, since we have found this to be true, we wish to give fuller expression to our constant desire, that all of God's children might know by experience the blessedness of really *living* by faith, by trusting in God alone, of believing in Him according to His word.

We desire this for, at least, the following reasons.

1. It encourages, believers in Jesus, to work earnestly and with right motives. When faith fails ambition to labor with right motives ceases. I can, at least witness to this. But if we live by faith we will (a). Do with our might what our hands find to do, Sec. 9: 10., (b) and seek first the Kingdom of God in doing it, Matt. 6: 33., (c) and we will make our wants known to Him in simple and earnest prayer. Phil. 4: 6. These things being attended to all that we may require for ourselves, and God's service in which we are then engaged shall be added. Matt. 6: 33. And this will be the case though our service might be of such a nature that we could expect nothing from it directly. The chief concern of the man of faith is not as to whether his labor is remunerative in the world's sense, but how far he may be fitted by nature and grace to perform it, and if it is profitable to those for whom it is given, and especially whether it is what God desires of him, what God wants him to do. This man cannot fail, cannot be slothful in business, cannot give up toil so

long as there is work to be done, and want to relieve. Their could never be any "capital, and labor problem" with him. He would strive to excel "but not with eye service" and unto God for whom all his labor is performed would he look for help.

2. This faith enables us to know "that all things work together for good etc." The natural man dreads trials, and even with us, who believe, the flesh shrinks from them. "Yet these are among the things we need most." It is in the hour of trial we best appreciate God's intervention. We see then the deliverance befits the need revealing to us the kind designing hand in all. The uninterrupted supply like the sunshine, and rain seem to teach us little of Him naturally. Unbelief does exist in the face of these. But it is when we see ourselves forsaken by all natural supports that the eye (so to speak) is directed from the gift to the giver. It is then we see whose hand helps us.

When, however, we are not living by faith, all things do not work together for our good. We then may make trails by trying to prevent them. A minister, for example, may take a stated salary hoping that being thus provided for he might without distraction attend to his preaching the Gospel. But in making this provision to obviate the possible trail of want he contradicts in his own practice the Gospel he preaches in word. The very fact that he declares the Gospel is free—"Without money and without price"—surely is inconsistent with a salary for preaching it. If Jesus gave His life without earthly remuneration to create the Gospel should a preacher take a salary for telling it? What reasonable man would undertake to harmonize these two positions? Yet such is the force of custom that very many Godly men take a salary for preaching a free salvation without apparently seeing the incongruity of it all, and without realizing how largely in the public consciousness this militates against them as truly sincere men. The preacher's aim is to get people to trust God, but in the very thing where he might show them a trust that even unbelievers could appreciate he seems to fail himself. Then again this works badly for him personally. Seeing that he first makes provision for himself even believers

are encouraged by his example to make first a provision for themselves. The result is that in many cases the ministers salary is not paid or so small a one is pledged that it will not meet his need. But, perhaps worst of all, should he succeed in getting enough salary is the impossible gulf that very thing places between him and those who have no such regular income, and the temptation it creates for him to be partial to those who can give much. This is not said in any spirit of fault-finding but to point out how a lack of trust will bring us to trial even when our ambition is to except it.

Should the preacher trust God as to the supply of his natural wants as he is asked to do Matt. 6: 19-34. Luke 12: 22-36. etc., then would his trials be a blessing. They would lead him to God in prayer for help. This would acquaint him more with God and His ways, and show him that prayer and faith are real factors in getting things done. Hence he would be the better able to speak to the Church and the world out of his experience of the reality of God with an assurance that can be gained only by actual trust. And further his very trials would with God's blessing increase the faith that enabled him to face them. It is a fact of our experience that when we have been spared them for any considerable time our faith has sensibly failed. Certainly God has made nothing in the conditions of life and death here to hurt us. He is too kind for that. It is our sins and unbelief that make them defeat us.

3. Again this faith, that rest upon the Word of God, and accepts, and is encouraged by trials, is the secret of righteousness. Heb. 11: 4, 6, 8, 17. Rom. 4: 3. Heb. 11. By this faith we are able to do right though it may seem to our natural reason, and to all natural probability that to do so would bring us to ruin. But this is the confidence we must have in God if we are to succeed in doing right in this wicked and advantage taking world. We must believe that whatever disaster seems to attend us while we walk in the ways of honesty and righteousness toward God and man that the Lord will after all, and against all human probability support us, and maintain our cause. Our hope for the issue must be maintained by the confidence we have that our

course of action is what the Lord desires, and our faith in Him as to the certainty that He will support His own purposes. When we have this faith no trials can make us deflect from what is right, but we will have a secret pleasure in encountering them, knowing that at the end when God has scattered them before us they will only serve to renew and enlarge our confidence in Him.

4. Further this faith exalts the Gospel of Christ. It shows that all other religions, and all apostasies are not of God. The religion of Christ only, and only when it is really followed, can be supported, and propagate by faith. It is not a most impossible thing to teach a religious absurdity and when people have come to believe it then turn on them and demand support for that they have come to believe is the only true faith, or to engage them in suppers, concerts, etc., for its maintenance. In ways like these some of the world's wildest cults have been, and are being fostered, and their material success has been pointed to as evidence of their genuineness. But the genuineness of the Gospel of Christ, and its superiority are proved in proportion to the measure of faith displayed in all its works. Heb. 11: 4. How discrediting, therefore, to this Gospel when we as believers resort to the schemes above mentioned for the support of its ministers and missions. Its works should display faith and trust: show that God and not man is its real patron. Its ministers can and should preach without salary. Christians should be taught to give regularly, and liberally, but the very appearance that they are thus instructed to secure a good living for their teachers should be strenuously avoided. As to where, when, and to whom they must especially give should be left for them to decide, and the teacher should make his wants known to God in full assurance that the Lord would by some means supply all his needs as an example of the truth that he teaches when he tells Christians "To give and it shall be given to them again." Were this more fully practised in the Church it does seem to me that with God's blessing it would show the difference between the

Gospel and all apostasies and false religions, and be an encouragement to unbelievers to accept its salvation.

I do by grace, know that there is a living God, and that I am saved from "the wrath to come," by the death of His son Jesus, and that I am counted righteous for His sake, should it, therefore, seem an unnatural or unnecessary thing for me to try and show by this everyday and visible proof of His kindness to us, the reality of these things? Can we consider this way of living and acting an extravagance, when so many seem to be laboring to gain God's favour by methods of their own, on the one hand, while others appear to find a license for lax living in Christ's saving blood, on the other? We do earnestly crave the prayers of God's children that He might be pleased to sustain us, and to make us a larger example of what redemption is, and what it does for those who believe in Jesus. Ah, we need your prayers so much!

If we are honestly thinking about what we are doing we cannot indefinitely assume the reliability of scripture, and the reality of the things of God, while continuing to act as if He were unreal, and the Scripture unreliable, without sooner or later questioning our assumption. It does seem to me that the too common habit of acting contrary to the "Word" where it does not just square with our reasoning, while assuming its inerrancy is largely responsible for its rejection among scholars and others as the infallible rule of conduct, and revelation of God's will to us. Certainly honest men, if they will think, must see the incongruity of accepting its inerrancy, and not its practicability. The only way to finally prove "That God saves us for Jesus sake," is to show by our lives, that we are saved for Jesus sake. To really prove the reliability of "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth. * * * * But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (food and clothes, etc.,) shall be added unto you," we must, as believers in Jesus (for these words were addressed to them) cease literally to lay up treasure upon earth and seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness (i. e., its advancement and conformity to

Him,) so that he may as literally add all the things needful for this life. When we have so fulfilled the conditions, and God the promise made by these words, then and then only have we proved their reliability. Then and then only can we know that they are unfailingly the words of God. And this rule holds good for the Bible as a whole. Live its principles and precepts. Watch how the men of the Bible succeeded, observe too their failures, and the cause of them, and regulate your conduct accordingly. It is then and only then we shall know the Bible to be the word of God. And then and only then will it be "A lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path."

It seems needful in conclusion to address a few words to those who do not know themselves to be God's children by faith in Christ. I know the Word of God to be true as given us in the Bible. I know this not by a few touching incidents but by an every-day evidence of it. Our work is now so arranged that it is needful for God to directly intervene for our help, in order that we might live. And as this and other Reports show, He has constantly fulfilled His Word in our experience. So I say to you with the authority of that "Word," that if you are not saved through Christ you must forever be lost, John 3: 35-36.

Jesus atoned for all sin. I. John 2 : 2. Your sins are remitted as soon as you believe that he has remitted them for you as an individual. As soon as you personally accept Christ as your ransom, and your righteousness. John 3 : 16-18. I. Car. 1 : 30. etc. If you cannot believe this, be willing to give up your sins, all that seems wrong to you, and ask God for faith to believe and you shall have it. John 7 : 17. Should it be but remotely possible that your soul might be lost forever, reasons demand that you should know all that you can know about it before you die. Should eternal life, endless joy, and fellowship, be but a probability reason asks that you should take every step necessary for you to take to secure it. How infinitely awful it must be for a soul to be forever damned when it might have been eternally saved. How deliberately do you commit selfmurder if in the face of

these considerations you for any reason neglect to test God's word to your own satisfaction. To neglect for a moment shows that you are blind to the import of these facts, and proves your utterly ruined condition. I stand with you as a friend, who has seen and knows about these things, do not talk back, do not be smart, be real, be honest. Test God's Word. You cannot help having doubts if you are not consciously redeemed. Come doubts and all. Bring them to Christ. Ask for faith to believe in Him as your saviour. Be willing at the same time to give up all known sin and you shall be saved and know it. If not you shall be damned and may not know it.

O. P. Brown.

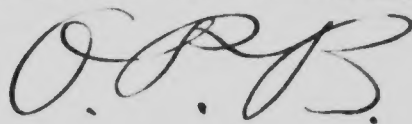
TABULAR STATEMENT.

Income for Pastoral Support, Offerings that come in through the Boxes

Hammonds Plains Church, First.....	\$270 16	
Yanky Town.....	19 56	
		\$289 72
Bedford		102 48
Sackville		69 39
Fall River		51 22
Hammonds Plains, Second.....		20 01
Lucasville ..		8 38
Total		\$541 20
Cash donations.....		81 47
" from other sources.....		9 75
Total cash.....		\$632 42
Bills remitted.....		7 51
Sundries, wood, edibles, etc		116 13
Parsonage aprox		40 00
Total personal benefits		796 06
To Pastoral assistance—		
Hammonds Plains, Second.....	\$ 15 03	
Kemp Town	10 91	
Fall River	9 08	
Lucasville	8 91	
Sackville	5 32	
H. M. Board	\$ 49 25	
Payzant Fund	70 75	
	80 00	
		\$ 200 00
Total to pastoral work		\$ 996 06
To Parsonage debt		71 00
" Cemetary.....		42 10
" " by labor		18 00
" Horse shed by labor		6 00
" H. Plains First Church, total expenses.....		20 10
" " " " to Missions, etc		15 00
" Sackville, Missions, etc		11 00
" " local expenses.....		17 00
" Fall River, East, Missions, etc.....		12 00
" " First, "		3 00
" Bedford, Missions, etc.....		6 00
" Lucasville, May 13, 1906 to 7		13 00
" Bedford Church, interest on hall		12 00
" printing, tracts, poor, etc , out of Lord's Work Fund.		13 80
" Private object of Lord's Work.....		110 36
" Seating Bedford Church....		43 62
		<u>\$1,410 00</u>

About \$40.00 of the above was raised by a bean supper, or other similar means, and the amount for seating the Bedford church was raised by solicitation. This will leave practically \$1,326.42 raised by free will offerings, except what was spent on the cemetery, which was given by those who use it as a place of burial. The total resident membership of the churches of this field, outside the colored churches which are practically mission interests, number approximately 77 ; addition to membership, 7.

Of the above amount \$60.00 were given to missions educational work, etc. We gratefully acknowledge the kind gifts of very many donors, whose seasonable help has enabled us to so successfully close another year. We would make special mention of \$30.00 given to the Bedford Church by the H. M. B., as this is not shown in the statement except in the disbursements.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "O. P. B.", is positioned below the text. The signature is written in dark ink and is somewhat stylized, with the letters flowing together.